

## 1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of  
3 Representatives wish to express their sincerest condolences  
4 to the family and friends of John Harrison Swarengen, Jr.,  
5 who passed away on August 2, 2002; and

6 WHEREAS, John Harrison Swarengen, Jr., the second of  
7 seven children of the Reverend John Harrison and Willie  
8 Beatrice Swarengen, was born on January 4, 1931 in Memphis,  
9 Tennessee; and

10 WHEREAS, Nicknames were special to Mr. Swarengen; some  
11 of his nicknames included "Junior", "Kunte Kinte" (African  
12 leader of a tribe), a name which was given to him by his  
13 siblings after the passing of his father in 1978; other names  
14 included "Peanut" and "Much Much Cool and Chilly One Chobby",  
15 a name that denotes his special relationship to his nieces  
16 and nephews; and

17 WHEREAS, Being the son of a minister and a very devoted  
18 mother, Mr. Swarengen professed a hope in Christ and was  
19 active at the First Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee;  
20 along with his siblings, he was involved in Sunday School,  
21 Baptist Training Union, choir, and other youth related  
22 activities; and

23 WHEREAS, From 1950 to 1952, Mr. Swarengen was a member  
24 of the United States Army Reserves and was called to active  
25 duty along with his brother, James, and other members of the  
26 community; and

27 WHEREAS, Mr. Swarengen excelled academically, graduating  
28 from Douglass High School as valedictorian of his 1968 class  
29 with visions of becoming a doctor; circumstances and finances  
30 thwarted this vision, but that did not keep him from becoming  
31 a perennial student who took enough classes for several

1 degrees at many colleges and universities in Chicago,  
2 including Northwestern University, the University of  
3 Illinois, the University of Chicago, and Chicago City  
4 College; and

5 WHEREAS, Never having lost his desire to serve others,  
6 Mr. Swearngen redirected his focus to community service and  
7 became a community activist; he worked with several noted  
8 politicians and community leaders, including the Reverend  
9 Jesse Jackson, Congressmen Bobby Rush, Gus Savage, and Danny  
10 Davis, State Representatives Earline Collins, Richard  
11 Newhouse, and Monique Davis, and Judge Timothy Evans; he  
12 served as campaign manager for City Council Woman Anna R.  
13 Lankford's first election to the Chicago City Council; in  
14 addition, he directed the Chicago Local Political Action  
15 Committee (COPE Fund) to raise funds to assist in the  
16 election of U.S. Senator Carol Moseley Braun and served on  
17 the Local School Council at Calumet High School from 1990 to  
18 1991; and

19 WHEREAS, Mr. Swearngen was a dedicated employee of the  
20 Chicago Post Office for over 40 years; his experience and  
21 dedication were assets to the American Postal Workers Union  
22 (APWU) for more than 24 years; he was one of the founders of  
23 the Chicago Local and first elected president of the newly  
24 merged APWU; a skilled mediator, he was the architect and  
25 chief negotiator of the first local APWU contract with the  
26 Postal Service; he served as Director of Labor Relations for  
27 APWU, processing grievances and reinstating many employees;  
28 he received letters of commendation from such people as Moe  
29 Biller, president of the National APWU; and

30 WHEREAS, The passing of John Harrison Swearngen, Jr.,  
31 will be deeply felt by all who knew and loved him, especially  
32 his beloved wife of 14 years, Lavern Mitchell Swearngen; his  
33 children, Sheila Swearngen Fair, John H. Swearngen, III,

1 Kimberly Walker, and Rebecca Mitchell; his 9 grandchildren,  
2 Jameta Swearengen, Anthony and Jasmin Fair, Coolythia Kyle,  
3 Brianna, Serena, and Savoy Mitchell, and Terris and Genoline  
4 Walker; his 4 great-grandchildren, Ja-onna, Terrel, and  
5 Agape' Lyle and Anthony Fair III; his brothers, Judge James  
6 E. Swearengen and Clarence Swearengen; his sisters, Mildred  
7 Swearengen Hayes, the Reverend Dr. Dorothy Swearengen Strong,  
8 and City Council Woman Evangelist Barbara Swearengen Holt;  
9 his sisters-in-law, Catherine Swearengen, Maebell Williams,  
10 Jolene Evans, Willie B. (husband, Jessie) Kitchens, Esther  
11 Deans, and Charlean Powell; his brothers-in-law, Eddie Hayes,  
12 Joseph Strong, James Earl and Michael Mitchell, and Anane'  
13 Nigritia; his aunt, Lucile Hawkins; his nephews; his nieces;  
14 his postal union family; and a host of relatives and friends;  
15 therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
17 NINETY-SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
18 we mourn, along with all who knew him, the death of John  
19 Harrison Swearengen, Jr. of Chicago; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
21 presented to the family of John Harrison Swearengen, Jr.,  
22 with our sincere condolences.